

*the free-Commoners of England, Declaring and Protesting against all Tyranny and Oppression, in whomsoever : Being Resolved to Owne their Native-byrth-Rights, and therein to Center.*

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WE having seriously weighed and considered the sad Estate and Condition of this Common-wealth, and finding by wofull experience, that Domination, Riches, and Honour, are the things which men in power have and doe still thirst after, and thereby capture and enslave the people at their wills, adding oppression to oppression, and doubling cruelties upon cruelties; Finding no Redresse of our miseries which wee daily groane under, Wee cannot hold our Peace, to see the Land of our Nativity wasted, and the Free-borne therein, become the worst of slaves. Therefore Wee doe Declare, and hereby solemnly Agree and avow unto each other, and to the people of this Nation, that we will improve all lawfull wayes and means, to the utmost of our power, for the Settlement and Constitution of this Common wealth, upon the foundations of an equall and just Government, by way of an Agreement of the People :

And in Order thereunto.

Wee doe Declare and protest against all Tyranny, Oppression, and cruelty, exercised upon our fellow Brethren, the free People of this Nation, by any whomsoever; And that through generall termes none may mistake us, Wee thus cleerly expresse our selves in particulars, followeth.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the long Session of those now in Parliament, who stile themselves the Supreme Authority of this Nation, as representours of the People thereof, but are not any otherwise then because the people have no other: and are therefore faine to be content with such officers, Lawyers, and corrupt persons, as the Commanders think fit to leave, together with a few honest men to manage their mischievous designs, and to bee over-voted at their pleasures.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the present usurpation and surprisal of the Name, Stamp, and Authority of Parliament, by the said House: And also against all their Votes, Orders, Ordinances, Declarations and Acts, or that hereafter they shall passe, as not binding to the People.

And therefore wee doe Promise and Resolve faithfully to each other, and to the people. That we will with Life and Fortunes to the utmost of our power and endeavors, after the speedy obtainment of a free and equall Representative, limited and bounded within the compass of Common Rights, Freedoms, and Safety, both in point of time and power, and to that end wee shall endeavour after the ancient Rights of annual Parliaments, wherein wee will acquiesce.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the Counsell of State so called, being of an unlawfull and corrupt Constitution, having no foundation from the consent and power of the People, being meerely erected and obtained by the Sword.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the Imprisonment of Lievetenant Col. *John Lilborne*, Mr. *William Walwyn*, Mr. *Thomas Prince*, and *Richard Overton*, by the said pretended Councell, and doe require their safe and present Enlargement from their Restraint, with honorable Reparations for the abuses and injuries put upon them.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the intrusion of the Military power into the Seat of the Magistrate, as wholly beyond the bounds of Justice; and altogether inconsistent with the Freedoms of England.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the cruel Oppression of Tythes, Excise, Monopolies, and Taxes of all sorts whatsoever except Tithes, the old and only just way of England, and particularly against this new Tax of 90. Thousand pounds *per annum*.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the Sale of the Kings Revenues, Bishops, Deanes, and Chapters Lands, or any other Lands, Goods, or Revenues, which of right belong to the pulique.

Wee doe declare and protest against the Inclosure of Fennes, Forests, Fields, Moores, Heaths, Woods, parks, Chases, and Commons of all sorts, which have beene taken from the poore of this Land.

And Wee are resolved to doe our utmost to restore them again for the good and benefit of the poore.

Wee doe declare and protest against the frequent giving away of great summes of money, and great Estates to private persons, to some 10, 20, 30, 40, 50. hundred pounds *per ann.* which doth of right belong to the publique, whilst the poore of the Nation are suffered to starve for want of Food.

Wee doe declare and protest against the Corrupt Interest of those Vermine and Catterpillers of this Common-wealth, The Lawyers, &c. And for ridding the Land thereof, and of all other Oppressions, wee resolve to improve our utmost Interest to put a period to the Cruell, Chargeable, Dangerous, and Fraudulent proceedings at Law; And that our Lawes, and all proceedings therein bee in short and plaine; and that the Law-makers, bee not Law-executours, that where no Law is, there may bee no punishment. That the Officers of the Common-Wealth bee Chosen in their Respective places and divisions by the people thereof; and that none continue above a yeare without rendring an account of their said Trust; That all Causes bee ended in the respective hundreds and Divisions, and no Suit depend above a moneth or quarter of a yeare at the furthest: That punishment bee proportioned more equally to offences, that so mens Lives and Estates may not bee forfeited upon sleight and triviall occasions: That no Judgement or Conviction of Liberty, or Estate bee, but only by 12. sworn men of the Neighbourhood: That no man bee proceeded against by way of Interrogation; or bee punished for refusing to Answer to Questions against themselves in Criminall Causes: That no person bee abridged from going into any parts beyond the Seas, unto which any are allowed, or be Restrained at home: but all persons be equally alike subjected to Law; That no person be pressed or Constrained to serve in Wars either by Sea or Land.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the Tyrannicall Usurpation and Incroachment of Lords of Mannors, who keepe divers of the Free People of this Nation in continual slavery and bondage, by laying Fines and other Services upon them, when as they by right are as free as themselves.

Wee do Declare and Protest against all Compulsive and Restrictive power in any person and persons in or about matters of Faith, Religion, and Gods worship.

Wee doe Declare and Protest against the Breach of that Solemne Engagement of the Army made at *Newmarket* and *Triplow* Heaths, 15. 1647.

Wee doe Declare and protest against all and every person or persons which shall by any wayes or means whatsoever, assume to themselves Kingly power within this Nation, or seeke to set up any one or more as Supreme, or shall usurpe any authority over the people of this Nation according to their own Wills; For it is not persons, but principles of Righteousnesse and Freedome which wee shall endeavor to advance.

And wee doe hereby solemnly, as in the presence of the All-seeing God, Agree and Vow unto each other, and to all the people of England, That wee will faithfully prosecute the Ends of this our Declaration and Protest; And with our Lives and Fortunes wee will be Aiding and Assisting to each other; And to all and every person that shall joyn with, and assist us in this our Engagement: And that wee will not, by the might of God, directly or indirectly goe back, or fall from the faithfull and constant prosecution thereof, till the Common-wealth upon the grounds of Common-Right, Freedom and Safety, bee Settled.